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Fifty-eighth session

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Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 29 September 2003, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Baja ..... (Philippines)

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03-53502 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Statement by the Chairman

1. **The Chairman** said that, while there were many exciting new items on the agenda, some issues had remained unresolved for decades. He had been reaching out to as many delegations as possible in search of innovative ideas and would continue to promote informal dialogue to overcome differences. He intended to work closely with the Vice-Chairman, chairpersons of the working groups and sponsors of resolutions to ensure that the Committee had a productive and meaningful session.

Election of officers

2. *Mr. Kanu (Sierra Leone), Ms. Ramoutar (Trinidad and Tobago) and Mr. Becker (Israel) were elected Vice-Chairpersons by acclamation.*

3. **Mr. Spacek** (Slovakia) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

Organization of work (A/C.6/58/1 and A/C.6/58/L.1)

4. **The Chairman** drew attention to the allocation of agenda items to the Committee (A/C.6/58/1) and the note by the Secretariat on organization of work (A/C.6/58/L.1).

5. With regard to the establishment of working groups, he recalled that the General Assembly, by its decision 57/512, had decided that a working group of the Sixth Committee should be convened during the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly from 29 September to 3 October 2003 in order to continue the work undertaken during the fifty-seventh session on an international convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/93, the Ad Hoc Committee established for the purpose of considering the elaboration of an international convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings was open to all States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The same formula had applied to the Working Group of the Sixth Committee during the previous session. He took it that the Committee wished to apply the formula to the working group to be established during the current session and to elect Mr. Gomez Robledo (Mexico) to serve as Chairman of that working group.

6. *It was so decided.*

7. **The Chairman** recalled that in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/28 the Ad Hoc Committee established under resolution 56/89 had reconvened in March 2003 to continue the discussion on measures to enhance the existing protective legal regime for United Nations and associated personnel. He took it that the Committee wished to establish a working group chaired by Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein) to continue the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and that the working group would be open, like the Ad Hoc Committee, to all States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

8. *It was so decided.*

9. **The Chairman** recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/27, had decided that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee established by resolution 51/210, whose most urgent task was to elaborate a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, should continue, if necessary, during the fifty-eighth session within the framework of a working group of the Sixth Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee itself had also recommended the establishment of such a working group. He suggested that the Committee should briefly postpone a decision on the matter until it could consult with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. **The Chairman** noted that the proposed timetable in paragraph 6 of the note on organization of work (A/C.6/58/L.1) indicating approximate dates for consideration of the agenda items allocated to the Committee and a target completion date of 6 November 2003, was the outcome of informal consultations convened by the Legal Counsel. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed with the proposed programme of work, on the understanding that it would be applied with flexibility in the light of the progress made by the Committee and that the Committee would take action on draft resolutions as soon as they were ready for adoption.

12. *It was so decided.*

13. **The Chairman** said that the programme of work just agreed upon took into account the need for efficient use of time and resources. During the fifty-seventh session, the Committee had improved its utilization factor to 84 per cent, above the benchmark figure set by the General Assembly. Nevertheless, it had lost 17 hours owing to late starts and early endings and could certainly make further improvements by starting meetings at the scheduled time, without a quorum, if necessary, and by being prepared to consider the next item on the agenda in order to utilize time left at the end of a meeting. He would welcome suggestions for improving the Committee's working methods.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.